

### Fraud Facts:

The vast majority of doctors, health care providers, suppliers, and private companies who work with the Veterans Administration (VA) are honest. A small minority commit health care fraud, waste and abuse that cost the medical care industry billions of dollars each year. VA is trying harder than ever to find and prevent fraud, waste and abuse by working more closely with health care providers and strengthening oversight.

- Health care fraud and abuse occurs in every facet of the health care arena.
- Fraud schemes may be carried out by individuals, companies, or groups of individuals.
- Health care fraud is the intentional misrepresentation of a material fact on a health care claim in order to receive bogus payment. Health care waste and abuse describes practices that, either directly or indirectly, result in unnecessary costs to a health care program.
- Healthcare fraud affects every American. Not only is fraud, waste and abuse taking critical resources out of our health care system, it contributes to the rising cost of health care for all Americans and harms the short-term and long-term solvency of these essential programs.
- Eliminating fraud will cut costs for families, businesses and the federal budget and increase the quality of services for those who need care.



### Some elements of fraud, waste and abuse may include:

- Misrepresentation or concealment of a material fact on a health care claim
- Knowledge that the facts on a medical claim are false or misrepresented
- Intent to deprive or harm the VA and its customers financially
- Unnecessary medical services or supplies
- Lack of conformity to professionally recognized standards
- Services or supplies rendered and billed at prices exceeding customary and usual charges



**The following are examples of possible Medical fraud:**

- A health care provider bills VA for services you never received.
  - A supplier bills VA for equipment you never got.
  - Someone uses another person's VA benefits to get medical care, supplies, or equipment.
  - Someone bills VA for home medical equipment after it has been returned.
  - A company offers a Medical drug plan that hasn't been approved by VA.
  - A company uses false information to mislead you into joining a Medical plan.
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Healthcare fraud is very complex making it more easily perpetrated and more difficult to catch than fraud in other areas.

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**Be suspicious of doctors, health care providers, or supplies that tell you the following:**

- The equipment or services is free; it won't cost you anything they only need your VA or Medicare number for their records.
- VA wants you to have the item or services.
- They know how to get VA to pay for the item or service.
- The more tests they provide, the cheaper the tests become.





### Be suspicious of doctors or plans that do the following:

- Advertise “free” consultations or medical equipment to people with VA benefits or Medicare benefits.
- Claim they represent VA or a branch of the Federal government.
- Use pressure or scare tactics to sell you high-priced medical services or diagnostic tests.
- Ask you to contact your doctor and ask for a service or supplies that you don’t need.
- Use telephone calls and door-to-door selling as marketing tools.

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Healthcare industry experts estimate fraud accounts for 3% to 10% of all health care spending.

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- Provide services outside the scope of the authorization and claim VA will pay.
- Put the wrong diagnosis on the claim so that VA will pay.
- Bill VA for tests you received as a hospital inpatient or within 72 hours of admission or discharge.
- Bill you, your private insurance, Medicaid or Medicare a balance after VA has paid.
- Refer you to non-VA providers without obtaining authorization from the VA and claim VA will pay.
- Bill VA for medical equipment for people in nursing homes.
- Bill VA for services you didn't get.

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The United States spends more than \$2 trillion on health care each year. It is estimated that more than \$60 billion is lost to health care fraud.

-National Health Care Anti-Fraud Association-

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**YOU** are VHA’s #1 defense against fraud, waste and abuse.

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## What are some things Veterans can do to assist in combating fraud, waste and abuse?

- Read your authorization for services (VA Form 10-7079 or VA Form 10-7078), Explanation of Benefits (EOB) statements and any paperwork you receive from the VA. Make sure you actually received the treatment for which the VA was charged.
- Don't allow anyone, except appropriate medical professionals, to review your medical records or recommend services.
- Don't contact your physician to request a service that you do not need.
- Avoid health care providers who tell you that the item or service is not usually covered, but they know how to bill the VA to get it paid.
- If you suspect fraud, contact your provider to clarify the service/charge and any questions you may have. If unresolved please immediately file a fraud complaint and include as many of the following facts as possible:
  - Name and address of the provider
  - Name of beneficiary who was listed as receiving the service or item
  - The claim number
  - The date of the service in question
  - The service or item that you do not believe was provided
  - The reason and any supporting information or documentation why you believe the claim should not have been paid.

## Watch Out For These Common Fraud Schemes:

People who call you claiming to be conducting a health survey and ask for your VA or Medicare number.

Simply hang up the phone!

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Telephone marketers who pretend to be from VA, Medicare or Social Security and ask for payment over the phone or Internet.



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Just Walk Away!

People who approach you in parking lots, shopping centers, or other public areas and offer free services, groceries, transportation, or other items in exchange for your VA or Medicare number

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Don't do it! They may want to steal your money.

## Who should I contact if I suspect fraud, waste or abuse?

- Local Supervisor/Manager
- VA Purchased Care: Attn: Purchased Care Program Integrity, 3773 Cherry Creek N Dr. #910 Denver, CO 80209-3812
- Phone: 1-800-488-8244 (VAOIG) Monday – Friday / Ref: VHA Purchased Care Programs
- Fax: 1-303-371-7771 / Attn: Purchased Care Program Integrity Office
- David Isaacks: 1-785-925-0605 or [david.isaacks@va.gov](mailto:david.isaacks@va.gov)